

## Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-30

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DRAFTED BY ARA/BC/B:MWCOTTER:BDT

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R 022013Z JUL 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

S E C R E T STATE 142916

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MASS, BL

SUBJECT: MILITARY EQUIPMENT FOR BOLIVIA

REF: (A) LA PAZ 4041; (B) LA PAZ 4082 (NOTAL)

(C) LA PAZ 3978

1. DEPARTMENT NOTED WITH INTEREST PRESIDENT BANZER'S REFERENCE IN REF (A) TO CADILLAC-GAGE ASSAULT VEHICLE (V-150); IT INDEED WOULD BE PREFERABLE WEAPON SYSTEM TO MEDIUM TANKS. WE ARE PRESENTLY GATHERING P&A DATA FOR V-150 AS REQUESTED IN REF (B), AND WILL FORWARD TO POST SOONEST. POSSIBILITY OF THIS SALE SHOULD BE ACTIVELY PURSUED BY COUNTRY TEAM, INCLUDING DEMARCHE BY AMBASSADOR WHEN V-150 P&A AVAILABLE, IN CONJUNCTION WITH EFFORTS TO DISSUADE GOB FROM PURCHASE OF SOVIET TANKS.

2. FYI. PRELIMINARY DATA INDICATES V-150 IS AVAILABLE IN THREE CONFIGURATIONS WHICH RANGE IN PRICE FROM DOLS 70,000 TO DOLS 177,250 PER VEHICLE. DELIVERY

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DATE IS APPROXIMATELY 12 MONTHS. MOST EXPENSIVE VERSION

IS EQUIPPED WITH A 90MM GUN. END FYI.

3. DEPARTMENT CONTINUES TO BE CONCERNED WITH BANZER'S (AND GOB'S) APPARENT MISCONCEPTIONS RE MEDIUM TANKS. BANZER'S COMMENT, REPORTED REF (A), THAT "THE US NO LONGER PRODUCES A MEDIUM SIZE TANK APPROPRIATE FOR BOLIVIA" DOES NOT ACCORD WITH FACTS. THE M-41 IS A LIGHT NOT A MEDIUM TANK. ALSO, WE ARE UNCERTAIN AS TO WHETHER BOLIVIANS THINK THAT SOVIET T-55 IS AN APPROPRIATE WEAPON SYSTEM FOR THEM.

4. WITH REGARD TO STATEMENT THAT SOVIET OFFERS ON TANK "MIGHT AMOUNT TO A GIFT", STRESS SHOULD BE LAID IN DISCUSSIONS WITH BOLIVIANS ON PITFALLS OF SUCH "GIFTS". BANZER HIMSELF HAS ALREADY NOTED THAT THEY ARE USUALLY ACCOMPANIED BY TECHNICIANS. IN ADDITION TO INTERNAL SECURITY CONSIDERATION, PRESENCE OF SOVIET MILITARY TECHNICIANS IN BOLIVIA COULD TRIGGER APPLICATION OF ARTICLE 26 OF OUR 1956 ARMY MISSION AGREEMENT WITH BOLIVIA AND ITS ATTENDANT CONSEQUENCES.

5. IN RESPONSE TO REF (C), WE ARE PRESENTLY GATHERING AND WILL POUCH INFORMATION ON COUNTRIES BESIDES BRAZIL WHICH CURRENTLY POSSESS THE M-41 TANK. WE WOULD NOTE, HOWEVER, THAT NORMAL POLICY CONSIDERATIONS WOULD NOT COUNSEL USG APPROACH TO THOSE COUNTRIES RE THEIR WILLINGNESS TO SELL OR OTHERWISE TRANSFER M-41S TO BOLIVIA. THE GOB WOULD HAVE TO MAKE ITS OWN APPROACH IN THIS REGARD. IF THE GOB WERE ABLE TO PERSUADE A THIRD COUNTRY, WE WOULD UNDERTAKE TO EXPEDITE TRANSFER PROCEDURES.

6. COMMENT: SUBMISSION OF P&A DATA ON M-48 IS AWAITING COMPLETION OF INTENSIVE REVIEW BY DOD OF U.S. AND ALLIED FORCES TANK REQUIREMENTS. THE FINAL RESULTS OF THE REVIEW -- DUE IN APPROXIMATELY TWO WEEKS -- WILL PROBABLY INDICATE A LONG LEAD TIME OF SEVERAL YEARS. THIS OFFERS FURTHER INCENTIVE TO ENCOURAGE GOB PURCHASE OF THE V-150. SISCO

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## Message Attributes

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